



SENE Scene

The biannual newsletter of Summit Expeditions and Nomadic Experience for friends of SENE and Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

Volume 2, Issue 1

June 2007

Special points of interest:

- New SENE Adventures
- Climb for a Cause October 2007
- Contest Winner

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esSENEtials: Two New Travel Adventures from SENE

Run Kili

When not guiding climbs up the mountain, Simon trains and competes in ultra marathons. He also holds the record for the fastest solo unsupported run up and down Kilimanjaro. He now wants to share his accumulated knowledge and experience with others as they enjoy running together on the beautiful slopes of Kilimanjaro.

Trail Running Training Camp

SENE's first running camp will be a three-day workshop in late October/early November. For those interested in learning more about trail

running, or who want to develop their fitness and endurance, or who just want to experience the joys of running in this beautiful spot, we invite you to sign up. Topics include running technique (quality), building endurance (quantity), training schedules, stretching and nutrition. All ability and experience levels welcome.

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Pedal Kili

Enjoy rides on dirt roads and paths through the farms and villages on the cool mountain slopes or down in the warm plains below. SENE has mapped out both loop and point-to-point rides from the Mbahe and Simba Farms. Select one that fits your interest and ability (or let us design a custom tour for you), strap on your helmet, and let's "pedal Kili!"

We use our own Kona American-made mountain bikes with 21 gears, shocks, and SENE-provided helmets.

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Climb for a Cause

October 2007

What can give you a greater thrill than reaching the summit of Kilimanjaro? Knowing that your personal triumph

just benefited the children of an impoverished village in East Africa. That is the satisfaction that 17 fortunate climbers will have as they participate in the *Climb for a Cause*, which

will take place on Kilimanjaro on October 19 - 29, 2007.

SENE is very proud to

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Just bring strong legs and a desire to explore the back roads of Africa!

For more information on the Kilimanjaro Marathon, visit the official website at www.kilimanjaro-marathon.com

Pedal Kili

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Multi-day Mountain Loop

SENE has a 3-day bicycle tour starting at Simon's Mbahe farm circumnavigating the mountain counterclockwise to finish at Simba Farm in West Kilimanjaro. You will experience the sights and sounds of life on Kilimanjaro at a pace that suits you. This 100-mile (160 kilometer) route travels mostly on all-weather dirt roads that loop the mountain between 5000 and 6000 feet above sea level. The road takes us through colorful mountain vil-

lages, past lush coffee and maize farms, and out into the drier upland and less densely populated areas on the northeastern slopes of Kilimanjaro. As we head west along the Kenyan border keep your eye out for elephant, giraffe, and other game that sometimes wander this part of the mountain. Carry only what you need for the day as your gear is transported to overnight camp sites with stunning views of both the mountain above and the plains below. Enjoy filling breakfasts to prepare you for the day's ride and a sumptuous camp dinner in the evening. Lunches

are picnics along the route.

Single-day Scenic Cycles

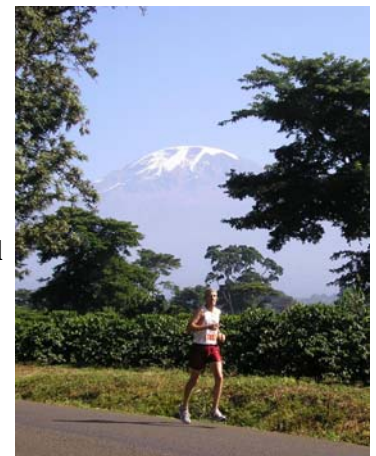
SENE also offers one-day guided rides of 15-50 miles around parts of Kilimanjaro. Options include rides through coffee estates, around Moshi town, across the Maasai steppe, visits to waterfalls or hot springs, or just along the back roads through mountain villages with beautiful scenery. Let us know your interest and ability level and we'll do the rest. All rides include a delicious picnic lunch.

Run Kili

(Continued from page 1)
Kilimanjaro Marathon Prep Camp

SENE will hold a 5-7 day training camp in the week preceding the Kilimanjaro marathon and half marathon run in Moshi in early March 2008. Enjoy your time prior to the race sleeping and training at high altitude to bring yourself to peak fitness. Besides designing final week training routes and

pace to help you do your best on race day, this camp offers customized training advice from Simon, specially designed meals in preparation for the race, and plenty of stretching, camaraderie, and relaxation. Whether or not you are running one of the marathons or the community 5K, you won't want to miss this camp. We also make all arrangements for your participation in the race,



transport you to and from the start/finish, and provide you with post-race refreshments and massage.

Client Connection: John Hegblom

Last November, John Hegblom, the 61-year old owner of a printing business in Minneapolis, Minnesota, made his second attempt to ascend Kilimanjaro. Despite the fact that he has two prosthetic knees, he persevered through the cold, thin air, and challenging climb to reach the summit. Simon was so impressed by his heroic effort that he wanted to have John share his thoughts about the experience.

What was most memorable about your climb? Besides getting to the top, it was the people in our group. I only wish I knew Swahili so I could understand more of their conversations. The porters, cooks and guides were terrific. Another thing that I remember was getting up in the middle of the night at 16,500 feet and the night sky was so clear I could see all the way to Moshi.

What was the most challenging part of the climb? Getting in and out of the tent. Having prosthetic knees and not being able to kneel on them presented some real challenges, especially in the middle of the night.

What most contributed to your ability to reach the summit? Simon, Bariki [a SENE porter], and my own stubbornness.

What wisdom can you share with others who are planning to climb Kilimanjaro? Have the proper equipment, be in shape, make sure to have altitude medication, and be flexible.

Would you ever climb Kilimanjaro again?

Yes. Now that I have made it there wouldn't be the same kind of pressure to get to the top so I could absorb more of the experience. As Simon says, of all the people that attempt the climb, 50% are successful and only 20% actually remember the experience. [Ed. note: SENE has a much higher success rate; we don't actually measure the "memory" rate.]

What memories did you bring back from Tanzania? The people. On both trips I was very impressed with their ability to work hard, sing, and laugh, laugh, laugh. I definitely wish I knew Swahili so I could understand some of the conversations, especially between the guides and porters. Most of their conversations were extremely animated and filled with emotion.

What would you like to do or see that you weren't able to before? I think I would like to learn more about how the local economy works. Get into the cities and walk around to get a

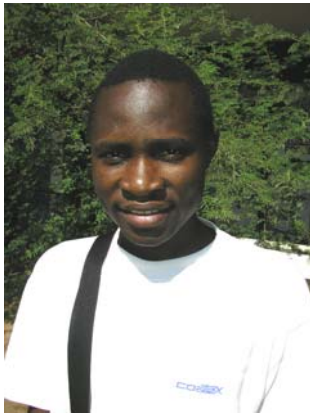


real feel about how things work . . . you see a woman carrying a huge bunch of bananas [on her head] and wonder where and to whom does she sell them.

Final words from Simon: "I was very inspired by John's focus to return to the mountain just seven months after his first attempt. And what a big smile he had at the top which said: 'We made it!' One thing I have learned from my many ultra races is to have patience and good things will happen . . . John showed this through his will and persistence. Congratulations John!"

"...at 16,500 feet...the night sky was so clear I could see all the way to Moshi."

Staff Spotlight: George Mtaki



Some of you may already know the subject of our employee profile in this issue, having reached Kibo peak under the capable leadership of SENE guide George Mtaki.

After finishing secondary school George earned certificates in tourism management and first aid and moved from his home on Lake Victoria to Kilimanjaro to work on the mountain. He started as a porter for other companies before joining SENE five years ago. Once he accumulated the necessary experience and completed intensive classroom and mountain training, George earned his qualifications as a guide, which he has been doing for the past three

years. During his time as porter and guide he has made, by his estimate, over 100 ascents of the mountain. Eventually, George hopes to guide internationally on other mountains in East Africa and elsewhere.

On the job, George enjoys getting to know the clients personally, share ideas, and create friendships while trekking up the mountain together. He often refers to the inter-dependence of climbers, guides, and porters working as a team to reach the summit.

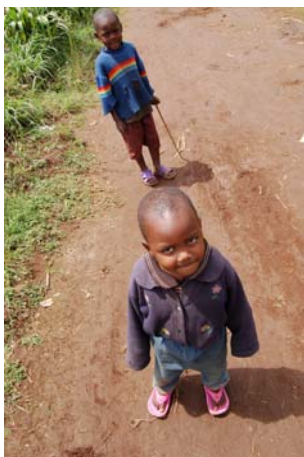
Over the years George has become a strong advocate of preserving the environment on the mountain and is particularly concerned about the

problem of accumulated trash left by climbers. On all his trips he educates the climbers about this problem. Not only does he observe the motto, “waste in, waste out,” but he always tries to take out more waste than he brings in – doing his part to keep Kili beautiful. George recently joined forces with a SENE client he met on a climb to start a recycling organization in Moshi, about which you can learn at www.bg-recycling.com.

George is married with two children, Paulo (4), and Flora (2).

Climb for a Cause

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team up with Nomad Charities to sponsor this meaningful event. Funds raised by the participants in this climb will go towards the construction of a 36-bed orphanage for children in the village of Kibwezi in Kenya who have lost their parents to HIV/AIDS. Each climber will be expected to raise up to \$10,000 (all tax deductible donations) as their contribution to the cause.

The climb will be led by Simon and will follow the route and itinerary that he has designed and that is so successful in helping people reach the summit. Of course, for this climb you won't need Simon's motivation to help you make it to the top, you'll have inspiration from Kibwezi village to get you there!

Nomad Charities was founded by two sisters from Bend, Oregon in 2002 with the mission to help the village of Kib-

wezi in Kenya with a range of projects to support community development and sustainable economic activities. To learn more about Nomad Charities, please see their website at www.nomadcharities.org.

If you or someone you know might be interested in participating in *Climb for a Cause*, you may order an information packet by contacting Nomad Charities Project Director Sara Wiener at sarawiener@mac.com.

Recommended Reading

Desire and Decline: Schooling Amid Crisis in Tanzania
by Frances Vavrus (Peter Lang Publishing, 2003)

Most visitors who come to Tanzania to conquer Kilimanjaro spend little time in Moshi, the main town at the foot of the mountain, or in any of the Chagga villages which it serves. On their drives up to and down from their entry and exit gates they may notice houses, schools, churches, or farms along the way, or marvel at the women totting bananas on their heads or school children in their neatly pressed uniforms, but they have no other exposure to this fascinating culture. SENE is unique in inviting clients to stay at Simon's ancestral farm in Mbahe village, with the opportunity of getting to know his extended family and explore the wider community. To learn even more about the people and culture on Kilimanjaro, we suggest reading *Desire and Decline*, which provides, through the lens of education, exceptional insight into contemporary Chagga culture and development.

Frances Vavrus spent a year living and research-

ing in a village on Mount Kilimanjaro. She observed classrooms, talked with students and teachers, and interviewed parents to produce an in-depth study of the role of schooling in the lives of these young people, their families, and the wider Chagga communities in which they live. The Chagga, like many indigenous cultures worldwide, are being swept up into the global economy and encountering both the benefits and challenges that it offers. Chagga youth seek secondary and higher education to create opportunities and enable them to take greater control of their destiny as they grow up in this rapidly changing world. Vavrus finds that education, often seen as a universal good for individual and national development, plays a much more complex role



in the community.

Although written for Africanist scholars and students, the book is easily enjoyed by all readers and is essential for anyone who cares about Tanzania and its development. With chapter titles like "Condoms Are the Devil" you can expect to encounter topics not normally found in your average scholarly tome. Plus, the many long interview quotes and animated dialog from focus group discussions allow the reader an intimate understanding of the lives and hopes and dreams of the people who call Kilimanjaro home.

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SENE Memberships:

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Tanzania
Association of
Tour Operators

A Lifetime Adventure... Achieve Your Dream

Karibu! Welcome! My name is Simon P. Mtuy. I am the founder of Summit Expeditions and Nomadic Experience (SENE). I invite you to join us for an adventure in Africa. We offer a variety of packages in Tanzania, ranging from extreme adventure to a leisurely vacation, from jeep safaris through the Serengeti to the beaches of Zanzibar. Our specialty is leading treks up Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain on the continent. Our expeditions are custom designed to meet your skill and interest levels. We can take photographers to dramatic landscapes as well as take our time exploring the natural history of each eco-zone as we move through it. My guides and I use less traveled routes to the summit, which add to our clients' enjoyment of the climb. No one knows the mountain better than we do.

Every SENE adventure begins and ends in the village where I was born, Marangu Mbahe, on the slopes of Kilimanjaro, where the local people, the Chagga, warmly welcome guests. I hope to attract visitors who want to experience the rare beauty of my extraordinary country and who are open to the magic of the land, the people, and the animals. My treks and safaris are odysseys of the spirit, mind and body. **Let me show you my Tanzania**

Mambo Mbalimbali (Miscellaneous)

Name this Newsletter Contest

In the inaugural issue of the SENE newsletter we asked readers to suggest names for this esteemed publication. We chose that provided by Bob Dier, SENE client from Berkeley, California. We

are proud to unveil our second edition of this newsletter under its new moniker, **SENE Scene**. John, look for your prize, a SENE t-shirt, in the mail. We thank John and all those who responded to our request with excellent suggestions.



Clean-Up the Mountain Climb

Coming in March 2008: SENE's first annual *Clean-up the Mountain Climb*, during which we will collect as much left-over trekker trash as we can and distribute information cards and post signage about the *Leave No Trace* wilderness philosophy, to which SENE ascribes. Look for more information on our website or in the next issue of **SENE Scene**. Please consider joining us for this important climb.